

A V
SERMON
Preach'd before the
K I N G,

A T
His Majesty's Chappel
I N
WINDSOR-CASTLE,
NOVEMB. 10. 1695.

By GREG. HASCARD, D. D. Dean of Windsor,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

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His Majesty's
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ACTS XVI. part of the 30, 31 Verses.

— *Sirs, What shall I do to be saved?*
And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus
Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy
house.

THE Conversion of the Jaylor here, is an effect of the precedent Miracle, v. 16. which was wrought by the Power of God, not only to reclaim the Pagan World from Idolatry and Superstition, but to vindicate the Persons also of *Paul* and *Silas*; who through some covetous Masters, who were angry that their Servant & Damself, who brought so much gain unto them by Sooth-saying, by these Apostles was now dispossest of her divining Spirit. So much did Covetousness outweigh their Charity and Religion, v. 19. and by the giddy Multitude, who under pretence of aged Customs and Superstition is soon fired into Cruelties, Riots, and Disorder, v. 21, 22. And through the Magistrates here, who were perhaps forc'd to comply, from the Clamour and Noise of the Herd, which many times grows the lowder from commanding Silence; these two

innocent Persons are condemned to the Rods and Prison; and the busy Jaylor, to please his Masters and the Rabble, bestows upon them the darkeſt Room in his Jayl, v. 24. where theſe two Saints did not warm their Heads to contrive Revenge, nor whine at, and bewail the Severity of the Judge, or the madneſs of the People, nor ſink into deſpair for fear of further Punishment, Axes, or Rods, that might attend them; but flaming with Devotion, like Souls upon the Wing, Spiritual and Divine, truly Citizens of another World, merrily and loudly ſend up their Prayers, and tune their Praises unto God, who ſoon heard, and by a miraculous Change in Nature, the ſhaking of the Earth, the moving of the Foundation of the Priſon, the Bands and Shackles of the Captives flying off, own'd the Faith and Creed that *Paul* and *Silas* taught, evidenc'd the vigour of a fervent Prayer, righted the Innocency of their Persons, and baptiz'd the Jaylor into the Religion of his Prisoners. For ſeeing theſe mighty Wonders, his Soul, that hitherto was kept in ſtraiter Bonds, and a darker Dungeon than ever *St. Paul* lay in, look'd now like the Priſon that he kept, from a clear Conviction upon his Mind, that he was a groſs Sinner, and that *Paul* and *Silas's* Religion brought Salvation with it, and was very true; full of fears and agonies of Mind, astonishment

ment and confusion of Spirit, comes trembling and falls down to them that he had whipt before, begging their charitable Advice in this great concern, *Sirs, &c.*

I. In which words these two Parts are to be considered,

I. The Question of great importance that is ask'd here, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

II. A plain and sufficient Answer given to it; *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

The State of the Jaylor here is the condition of all Mankind, who from the natural Light that shines within, and divine Discovery from above, sent into the World, clear up an immortal State with infinite Sorrows, or eternal Joys to attend their different Actions, which puts the Souls of Men upon the Search, and Passion, Fears and Hopes, Jealousies and Desires, to fly from the Flames which burn under their Feet, and to attain the Crown of Glory which hangs o're their Head. There is no Man of so fear'd or cauteriz'd a Conscience; there is no Man of so bold and daring a Spirit, but some time or other shivers and waxes Pale to think that either he must take an eternal Sleep in the Grave, and never be again, or else be lash'd and scourg'd for his Follies if he doth survive. No Man's Blood is so warm and feverish,
with

with the pleasures and joys of this Life, but hath its cool intermission when Conscience and Reason debate the Case and ask him, What will be the issue of all these things? What will be the result and conclusion of all my Lusts and Vices? Live I cannot, Dye I dare not; Where shall I fly? What Spirits shall I be company for? As the Apparition said to *Saul*, I e're long must be with them. Such is my dismal Streight and Condition, *What must I do to be saved?* No Man's Methods and Arts are so sly and cunning, to extinguish the notion of a God, to pull down Heaven and put out the Fires below, to smother the cries of Conscience, and draw the Curtain upon the light of Reason; but some time or other, either when Afflictions or Troubles arrest him, and stop him in the full career of his vicious Pleasures, or when Sickness, Disappointments, or a Dying Bed seize his Passions, then he cries out, like the Sorcerer, *Oh! let me dye the death of the righteous;* and whatever my life was in the beginning, *let my latter end be like his.* Call a Confessor and a Guide, for I am a going I know not whither, and Hell and Despair begin to appear; And what shall I do? This is the Language of all Mankind, of the Timorous and Inquisitive, the Young and Aged, the Melancholy and the Gay, the Sensual and Vicious, the Pagan and Christian, the Question

in every Man's Breast. God hath been so kind, by the Gospel, to give us a plain and sufficient Answer to this important Question, telling us what we were, what we are, and what we must be; pointing out our Joys, discovering our Dangers, describing our Countrey, and the Inhabitants above, giving us wise Counsel and wholesom Directions, how we must walk and arrive there. In short, only thus; to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And which Words may be discours'd on by this Method.

1. To consider who the Persons are, who can properly ask this Question.

2. What is the Nature of this Belief, or Faith that will save us?

3. To evidence that, this Answer is plain and sufficient.

4. Some Conclusions from the whole.

1. 'Tis the Question of a Pagan to a Christian; and 'tis the Case of the Jaylor here, who sadly complains that his Notions and Evidences for Immortality were very uncertain and obscure; and that the most Learned among them, and the best of their Guides did confess this. Seneca therefore acknowledgeth upon what Grounds his Hopes of another Life was founded. *I did believe, saith he, the Opinions of our great Men about the blessed State for departed Souls, not for the sake of their Arguments, but*
the

the Perswasion was Pleasant, and I could wish that it was True. And Socrates coming to dye, after he had made his fine Oration about the Soul and Virtue, and the Blessed Mansions above, said, Upon this account I could dye Ten thousand Deaths; but concludes, whether this be so or no; only the Gods above do know. And the Reasonings of their great Antoninus, as famous for his Philosophy as for his Empire, and several others about the Nature of the Soul, and the Justice of Providence, Whatever strength they have in them (as a great deal they have) yet are above the ordinary level of Mankind, and the Rules and Maxims of their Philosophers for a Virtuous Life, as the way to Heaven were many times above, sometimes below, and some parts of their Religion unworthy of their Practice; that they were distracted and confounded among themselves about the best end of Life, and the chiefest Good; that they drew but imperfect Notions, and Features of the first Mover, or Supreme Deity; and therefore serv'd him by the rude Addresses of the *Dii Medioximi*, their intermediate Gods and Saints, derogatory to his Honour and Greatness. And the vulgar World was so enslav'd in their Lusts and Apprehensions, that they not only ador'd the Sun or Stars, a Lyon or an Oak, things that were Great, Generous and Useful; but like the *Sorish Egyptians*, below their Nature, Crocodiles and Monkeys,

Monks, Lettice and Onions, of which they might have a new Crop of young Gods and Goddesses every Year. And besides all this, the Pagan had an active Reason, and a busy Conscience within, and a lively impression of God enstamp'd upon his Soul, which he had much abus'd, though he could no more utterly deface, than put out the Sun, and that he should survive this Life, and be lash'd and scourg'd, crown'd or rewarded in the other World. And therefore he cries, *Allay my Fears, and support my Hopes, and tell me, What must I do to be saved?* The Christian can prescribe him that Physick which cur'd his own Disease, and is approv'd by the Testimony of numerous Converts, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, &c.* But that he may not wink and swallow this down, and cure himself only by a warm Fancy, thinking he is well, and have no reason for the Prescription, the Jaylor here had the mighty Argument of Miracles for his Conversion, and all Mankind justly challenge some reason for their Persuasion. And therefore the Christian Guide tells the Pagan, That the Christian Religion or way of Salvation, hath the clearest Evidence on its side, being confirm'd by greater and more Miracles than any other Persuasion. That its Doctrines are suitable to the reason and dictates of humane Nature, highly serviceable to the true Interests of Men here in all

Capacities and Relations, and an endless Life hereafter. That its Author Jesus had a stupendous Birth; his Person, Offices and Actions; Prophecy's of long before, and exactly fulfill'd in all these due Circumstances. A Person he was of an unsullied Life, and without any design of secular Interest or Popularity, hugely Generous and Charitable to all sorts and degrees of Men, who sign'd his Discoveries and Truths with the smartest Agonies and Effusion of his Blood, and Crown'd and Confirm'd all his Laws by a greater Wonder, his Resurrection from the Grave: Who continu'd the Arguments for our Faith in the Mission of his Spirit, by the miraculous Gift of Tongues upon his Apostles; Men of the greatest Sincerity and Integrity, who with the succeeding Ages, without any sinister Design, convey'd in an undoubted way the History of this Religion to this present Age, a way equivalent to the hearing of our Ears, and seeing of our Eyes; a faithful Tradition supplying our Senses. These and many more are the Arguments of our Christian Faith, and fit to prevail upon an honest and unprejudic'd Mind. What shall the Pagan, the Atheist, or the doubting Christian (who is always for laying the Foundation again, but never building up the Superstructure of an holy Life, by reason of some particular Vices that he is loth to part withal) do to be saved?

Let

Let them weigh and consider, try and examine; for the Christian Religion, by such Reasons as these hath prevail'd upon the Great and Learned, upon all Tempers and Professions of Men; and if they will let their Passions and Prepossessions submit to their Judgment, they will find Arguments sufficient to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to be baptiz'd into the Christian Faith.

2. 'Tis the Question of a Christian, troubled with the Divisions of Christendom, not knowing to what Church to adhere. The honest Christian sadly finding Religion torn into so many Parts and Pieces, and every Division and Sect of Christians confining Christ, with all his Privileges and Promises, to their private Sect; small Fraternities, and Cloysters, single Families, and particular Persons, have bestow'd upon themselves the great Names of the only Church and Household of Faith; and Sentenc'd all the World for Reprobates, not within their narrow Bounds and Pale; and have chain'd, as the *Tyrians* did their gods, to their City, Providence and Religion, Heaven and Eternity, only to their own side; and every one with a *Danionius* fix'd unto their Creeds: The Seed of *Isaac*, in this, too much like that of *Ishmael*, he against every Man, and every Man against him, discharging Censures and Excommunications one against another. The plain Christian that thinks a Soul and

God, infinite Rewards, or Miseries, are too great to be plaid wixhal, and frighted with the confident pretences of some, and acted upon by the sly Methods of others, begins to be wavering in his Faith, uncertain in his Hopes and Profession, and like a bewildred Pilgrim standing where variety of Ways do meet, surrounded with Woods and Waters, and hearing different Voices, crying, *Come hither, and here is Christ; go thither, and there is Jesus;* and pointing yonder, *Lo, there by the way that leads to Sin;* He begins to tremble, and begs of some charitable Guide to lead him by the Hand to the House where Christ dwells; asks him the way how we may walk securely. *What must be do to be saved?* He is the safest and most faithful Guide that tells him this, *Believe in the Lord Jesus; he is the way, the truth, and the life.* For this is the Summary of the Gospel, the Epitome of all true Religion, wherein all Christians do agree, and a general prospect of that new and living way alone whereby we must be say'd, manifest to Men in the Schools, and at the Plow, the Learned and Illiterate, Faith to whatever God hath revealed in Holy Writ, and a Life conformable to his Laws. Which Compendium of our Faith, when Men of Wit and Interest drew out into longer and smaller Threads, and multiply'd fundamentals, defining obscure Notions for Divine Lights and Evi-

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dent Truth, by an Authority more dark than they; they found Religion, made it a fardle of Perplexities, and an indigested heap of Speculations. The Apostle foreseeing this, reminds his Son *Timothy* to ^{2 Tim.} keep close to the form of sound words, which was this ^{1. 13.} belief on Jesus, and the Doctrine which is according to Godliness. Which when Men of Fancy and nice Conception, mixt with Secular Designs, slighted and contemn'd, they ruin'd that Faith that was once deliver'd unto the Saints. And when the great Commission was sign'd unto the Apostles to go and preach to, and baptize all Nations, they receiv'd an Abridgment of that Religion which they were to teach, which was only this, *That Jesus was the Christ*; and this became the Character of a true Christian; and 'twas the brand of the Man of Sin, whosoever and wheresoever he is, that either directly, or by natural Consequence he should deny, *That Jesus was come in the flesh*; that the Son of God ^{1 John} had taken upon him Humane Nature. And 'twas ^{4. 2, 3.} the Wisdom of the first Planters of Religion, to prevent the Cavils of the *Gnosticks*, and other peevish Disputants, whose Heats are most kindled by Straw and Scubble laid upon the Foundation. ^{1 Cor. 3.} Variety of Phrases, and changing of Syllables to re- ^{11, 12.} duce all the Fundamentals of Religion, and comprize them under short Rimes, call'd our Creeds; which when after Ages throw into chin and invisible

ble Surfaces, our Faith turn'd into Faction and sophistical Niceties, the easiness of Religion, its true Honour, was confounded, the Commandments of Men, the Institutes of the Schools, *Aristotle* Canoniz'd, the Prejudices and Craft of the Age brought into the Temple, and call'd the Holy of holies. Christian, What shall you do to be saved? You are safe and secure in this Church, that preserves this Faith intire as its Author did deliver it, neither wresting its Articles from their natural Sense, nor adding any, pretending a Divine Commission, nor diminishing the number of them, whose Doctrine is Apostolical, Discipline primitive, and Ceremonies few and decent, all leading to an holy Life, the solemn end of all Religion. As for those Controversies that are not of this Foundation, which warm the Heads of the Learned and Studious, and stir up the Blood of the Angry and Peevish, if the unhappiness of your Education, the privacy of your Living, or greatness of your Employment, will not permit you to state and determine their Truth, the Spirit of God will either lead you into it, or else your industry, probity, and sincerity of Mind will excuse your Ignorance, which in such matters will never hazard your Salvation.

3. Tis the Question of a Vicious Christian to his Spiritual Guide, who having been baptized in

to this most Holy Faith, made his solemn Vows for a Virtuous Life, and by entertaining the hopes of a blessed Eternity; lifted himself under the Banner of Christianity, yet notwithstanding all this he hath souly apostatized and run from his Country, betraying his Faith and his Conscience, his Resolution and his Reason into Lewdness and grosser Follies, and prostituting all Holy Things, crucified the Lord of Life again; whereby he has degraded his Nature, wounded Religion, stain'd his Family, damnified his Prince and Countrey, scandaliz'd all that are good and wise, and abus'd his God; and now being an Aged and Gray-headed Sinner, labouring under Infirmities of Body, the Punishment of his Greener Days, and a distemper'd Conscience within, and now taking a view of all his Pleasures and Follies that are past, giving this sad account, That he began them in Fancy, carried them on in Labour, and now end in Dissatisfaction and Disdain, and this sorrowful Question here, after a Life so ill spent, *What shall he do to be sav'd?* Sinner, What shall you do to be sav'd? Renew your Vows, repeat your Resolution, abhor and detest your Follies that are past, and take the Prophet's Advice to the Tyrant, *Break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor,* and it may be a lengthning of your Tranquility, your Possessions will be enjoy'd with a more.

more easy blind, and your lawful Pleasures will taste the sweeter; for this is believing on the Lord Jesus; Faith being a comprehensive term, signifying not only our Assent, but our Obedience, and our Creed and Practice: So to Believe, as to repent, so to Repent, as to bring forth fruit meet for repentance: So to Believe, as to change your all habits, to reform your Manners, to restrain your Passions and vain Desires, and put a final conclusion to all your Lusts and Follies: and the true will of your life may suffice you to have wrought the will of the Good. If you have been guilty of Violence and Oppression, Restitution must be made, a large and free Charity must be exercis'd, and Satisfaction made in all Capacities: You must run contrary to, and unravel all the ill Customs you have contracted, recant and unseal wherein you have deceiv'd, by a Virtuous Example, Discreet, and Behaviour, allure unto Piety, where by your various Actions, you have seduc'd, in time to come the manifestation and self denial: Go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto you; and now be more Brave and Generous, and like St. Paul, because once a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, upon his Conversion he laboured more abundantly, and his faith wrought and was perfected by love. The Sinner so believing, and so acting, let his former Crimes be of never so deep a dye, never so many, of a long continuance,

and cloath'd with all their aggravating Circumstances, is heavy laden, yet hath his Pardon seal'd in Heaven. Remission of Sins by Christ being as certainly true, as Jesus is the Christ. This is the Plank after Shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience, by which we may swim to Shore. This is the way to redeem time that is mispent and fled away; to call Life back and act it o're again. The Sinner thus sincere and resolv'd, is accepted into Favour, treated like a righteous Person, his Debts cancell'd, no former Miscarriages to upbraid him, but look'd upon as a Saint and a Friend of God, his Question Answer'd, and he eternally sav'd through Christ on whom he did believe.

4. 'Tis the Question of an honest Christian, troubled in Mind, whose wounded and timorous Spirit viewing a large Catalogue of black and crying Sins, though now repented of, fancies them beyond the Divine Mercy and Reprieve. Sometimes an Hypochondriacal Passion, the effect of his Constitution, over-clouds his Soul, which he calls the Anger of God, the withdrawing of his Spirit, and the doom of Heaven: To day he is disappointed, and some Calamity of Life, Fire or Milderew blasts his Hopes; he measuring his Assurance in God, by Success and Sunshine, thinks Heaven is gone, and Dearth will miscarry. His penfive Thoughts trace every Fault for an habitual Sin,
 and

and swells every Error into the Sin against the Holy Ghost, unpardonable, and dye he must. Sometimes his Thoughts are confus'd about another World, and hath dismal Apprehensions about eternal Decrees; and some severe Men have denounc'd Damnation against him, because he is not of their Party and Division, and because of some unintelligible Characters which Enthusiasts have set for Men to judge by, whether they shall be sav'd or no; and overaw'd by the greatness of Eternity and God; and the sly Deceiver who first tempts Men to presumption, and then to despair, improving Scruples into Despondency. *David's* roaring for the Disquietness of his Mind, and the *Jaylor's* Question here, *Miserable man that I am, What shall I do to be sav'd?* The only Balm for this wounded Spirit, is such a Faith as this; it being the Condition of the New Covenant and our Salvation, and the sum of all our Duties and Labour. All those other Conceits being Errors and Misapprehensions of the Divine Goodness, and Methods of the Gospel. For it's plain to all, that whoever believes, shall be sav'd; and that Man certainly believes, who refrains from his vicious Inclinations, because Christ commands, and can easily judge whether he doth so or no; and if he shoul'd mistake in judging too severely of his Condition, so long as he hath done his Duty, his Mistake may be his Vexation here, but never his Damnation.

Damnation hereafter. For 'tis harsh to conceive of the Divine Clemency, that if the Christian hath discharg'd all his Duties, and is perfect by an Evangelical Allowance, that yet he should be Damn'd, because his fear of God may border a little upon Superstition, and Scruples and Objections may gnaw upon him, not his Pleasure but his greatest Pain. Had your Servant faithfully discharg'd all your Commands, and paid his Reverence, yet was fearful lest he had omitted any thing, or done amiss, and therefore began to despair of your Favour and Reward; Would it not look very cruel to deny him the Reputation of, *Well done good and faithful servant, enter into your masters joy?* Shall not the Judge of heaven and earth do right? Who will try Men at the last Bar, not for their invincible Errors, Misprisions, mortal Fears and Suspicions, which are far better than Confidence and Presumption, but by Principles and Practice, wilful Ignorance and habitual Vices; these and these alone will Sentence them into eternal Despair. Our merciful High-priest knows and pities our Mold and Frame, and the sad Circumstances of humane Life, and the Covenant of Grace and its Messias are Prophecy'd of, *Not to quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed.* The Justice of our Judge, and the Goodness of our Advocate will not suffer us to lose our Possession of Heaven, though we understand not the nature of the Title, and procedures

Isa. 42. 3.

procedures of the Court, when by Faith and Repentance 'tis made out, and in it self, and to those knowing and righteous Persons it appears very true. Divine Providence many times permitting these Doubts and Scruples in the best of men, to make them the more to stand upon their guard, to quicken their motions, to inflame their Prayers and Zeal, and other excellent Purposes. And tho they may, like *Lazarus* with his Rags and Sores, die in some Errors and Infirmities of Life, and in Clouds and uncertainties pass by the Gates of Hell, yet they shall not stay there, but certainly arrive at Heaven.

2. What sort of Faith this is, that will save us. 'Tis such a Faith as is productive of good Works, Mercy, and Charity, change of Manners, newness of Life, mixt with Modesty and Humility, without pretending Merit, or challenging of Heaven. We cannot obey except we believe, and we do not believe except we obey. Faith and Obedience in Scripture-Language being put one for the other, both made necessary to Salvation, without an idle dispute about the preference. Faith is the Radix and Foundation of all Christian Virtues, and when these are built upon it, it receives its Complement and Perfection, without which Faith turns into Romance and Story, and will no more avail us to gain Heaven, than a Winter Nights Tale. Such a belief as rests only in Speculation, would contradict

tradition the great End of Christ's coming into the World; which was to pull down the strong holds of Sin, and overturn the Dominions of the Devil; this is the way to make them stronger still, and enlarge his Power, if such a Faith is sound and saving, only to believe that Christ hath done so much for us, there is nothing left for us to do, but only strongly to believe it, and admire it, and so pass in a full Gale of our own Fancy into another World. True Faith operates upon the Believer's mind, to abate his Conceit and Pride, his Passions, and his Lusts, to make a surrender of himself to the Government of Jesus, to be guided and directed by him, to take his Revelations, or Pleasure in their whole Compass and Latitude, his Precepts and Promises, his Commands and Predictions, and set an equal value upon all, except we think that Christ is in earnest only with some parts of his Gospel, and others are only for Scene and Show. A natural Religion in some degree obliges Men to Virtue and Goodness; and Christ's reveal'd Religion heightned those Virtues to an higher pitch by reason of greater Rewards, and the clearer discovery of them; and never intended to put bare belief into their place, which was the way to make us less Men by being Christians, and turn the Royal Law and Liberty into Licentiousness. We are to believe under the pain of Eternal Damnation,

nation, the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus with all his Offices and Undertaking for Mankind; but as such Truths are very apt and fit to correct our Nature, and keep us to our Duties; so if they do not attain that end, as well to make us live righteously, as to think aright; to purify our hearts, as to clear our heads, our Faith will turn into dream, our Grace will prove phantastick, and our Hopes of Heaven are ill-bottom'd; *And tho our faith be as strong as to remove mountains, yet it will be counted only the tinkling cymbal, to make a noise and disturb the World;* and when we knock at Heaven Gates with a great deal of passion, crying, *Lord, Lord, open unto us;* the Answer will be, *Be gone, I know you not.*

3. To evidence, that this is a plain and sufficient Answer to this important Question, *What shall I do to be saved?*

This will appear very true and clear, if we consider what the Gospel saith, our only Judge and Oracle in this matter. If we search the Divine Records, we shall easily find, that such a Faith as this is laid down as the only necessary Condition of our Salvation. And 'tis indifferently exprest, That if we expect to be sav'd, sometimes we must believe, sometimes we must obey, both for the same design and purpose, to tell all men their duty. When Christ was therefore ask'd, What was the Condition of Eternal Life, his Answer was to some, That they must

must believe on him the Promised Messias; to others, That they must keep the Commands; both of them inseparable Duties. And when Christ ask'd his Disciples, *Whom say ye that I am?* St. Peter answer'd, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.* Christ replies, and tells them, *Upon this rock, upon this Confession, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it:* This Faith shall somewhere or other last, and be the Condition of mens Salvation to the end of the world. This was the good Confession that Christ himself witness'd before Pontius Pilate: This was Mary's Creed: And this was that the doubting Disciple made upon his Conviction, *My Lord, and my God:* And all this naturally producing Charity and Meekness, and such excellent Virtues. And the beloved Disciple tells us, this was the Character of one that is born of God, *That he should believe that Jesus was come in the flesh.* And the great Apostle makes this the Sum of all Religion, *Charity out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeign'd.* And when the rest of the Apostles and Apostolical men laid down the several Notes for men to judge by, whether they should be sav'd or no, as Grace and Spirit, Decrees and Church, and the like, they all center here, tho express'd by different Names, Faith, Sanctification, Regeneration, purifying and cleansing; and all Prayers and Sacraments, Temples and Altars, Disci-

Matt. 16.
16, 17,
18.

1 Tim.
6. 13.

Joh. 20.
20, 28.

1 Tim.
1. 5.

Discipline and Ceremonies, aim at this, to guard this short Creed, and an honest Conversation. That no Age nor Sex, Interest nor Party of men might call themselves the People of God, except they wrought Righteousness, chang'd their Manners, and by Evangelical allowance became perfect and holy, as their supposed Heavenly Father was. And such a Religion as this, and this alone, is pure and undefiled.

The Conclusions that follow from this whole Discourse are these Two.

1. That if such a Faith as this will save us, we are safe and secure in this Church of England, notwithstanding the Damnation that some men denounce against us, and the Anger of others that separate from us: For this is the Creed of our Church, this we firmly and sincerely believe. And if these early Christians could be undoubtedly sav'd by the Confession of such a Faith, why not we, who believe this in the same sense that Christ and his Apostles deliver'd it, and in a more diffus'd and explained manner, as the Christians about the first 300 years taught us in their Three most famous and celebrated Creeds; and also what is necessarily presupposed or implied in this short Creed, or by natural Consequences deduc'd from it. But those things that have no dependance upon, or relation to this Creed, or endeavour'd to be deriv'd from it,

is only by dark or remote Implications, and rather seem destructive of it, we cannot Christen Articles of Faith, or Fundamentals in Religion. How comes it to pass that those First Christians could be sav'd by this Faith, and not we upon whom the ends of the World are come? Are there Articles of Faith necessary for one Age of the Christian World, and not for another? Or was there any other Authority given to stamp new Articles for the urgent Necessities of the Church? Or how come these new Necessities? And why must the narrow way be made narrower still? Those that do dissent from our Church, could never justly charge any Rules or Doctrines upon it, leading to Ill Manners, or Impiety; but that it teaches universal Justice and Charity towards all, and especially all Humble Deportment and Duty to our Superiors. And we are sure, upon the Word of an Apostle, That our Creed is full and firm. And if he that believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, we are sure then that we are the Sons of God. And with Peace and Security to our Minds and Consciences, we may say of our Church, which is nothing else but Old Christianity, as the Disciples did of its Author, the Blessed Jesus, *Thou art He, and we look for no other.*

2. Let us consider the Nature of the Faith that we rely upon for our Salvation. For many are so fond of and dear to their own Persons, as to call

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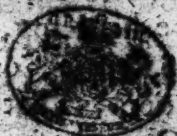
them.

themselves Saints, and Favourites of Heaven, who
 are violent in their false hopes, and by force storm
 Heaven, with no other Title than the Mad men
 of Athens had to the Ships coming into that Port,
 his Fancy or his Frenzy. Give a reason therefore
 of your Hopes and Expectations. You, perhaps,
 believe, That Jesus is the Christ; his Person Inno-
 cent, and his Doctrine Pure; but if this be all, if
 it reach not your Lives, 'tis but the Creed of the
 Spirits in despair, who, perhaps, do more than
 you, both believe and tremble too. Your Passi-
 ons sometimes are warm, and you magnify the
 Achievements of your dying Lord, extol his Cha-
 rity, court and admire his Promises, and the Pur-
 chase he hath made for you; but will this bear of
 Devotion alone serve the turn, that Hypocrites and
 other Vicious Persons can be lovers at an equal rate,
 who cannot but admire Jesus, who hath secur'd
 Heaven for them, and given them a dispensation
 for their Vices at the same time. You Pray and
 Communicate, you Vow and Resolve, and once in
 a Year you give your Souls a little Physick in the
 Springs, and keep a Lenten Fast; 'tis well in hi-
 ments; but if your Devotion be out of breath,
 not to outstrip and leave your Sins, 'tis Road
 and Custom, Popular Fame, or Slavish Fear;
 but no true Principle or Ground of Hope.
 You sin and repent, to give your Mind a little
 ease,

ease, but you go not forward, for you Sin and Repent again, and you are got into a Circle, and such a round as this will make you giddy, that at length by Custom you will scarce know which is Virtue, and which is Vice. And 'tis hard to conceive, that Men are fully perswaded that the Flames burn under their Feet, and yet make from them only by such dull Paces; or that Heaven and a Soul are of that moment, yet put them both upon *perhaps* and *peradventures*. In short, no Man's Faith is true, no Man's Hope is well-grounded, no Man can truly call himself a Son of God, except he be baptized into, and live in the Jailor's Faith. What is that? To make Confession of his Faith and Sins together, the Commands and Creed to be equally reverenc'd to make him a true Christian, a better and braver Man than the common Lump and Mass of Mankind, and to reduce his extravagant Passions to the Regal Authority of Christ. Such a Faith this must be, that chuseth Christ to be his King, as well as his Priest, to become his Sacrifice, or his Prophet, only to tell him Futurities. That when Interest and Pleasure come in Competition and rival his Religion and Innocency, he can shake Hands with all those, and stick fast to his Conscience and his God. Such a Faith this is, that believes the Incarnation of Christ to condemn Sin in the Flesh.

Such

Such as believes his Circumcision is order to Justification and Purity. Such as believes his Resurrection, not only to ascertain us of Glory, but to remind us also of newness of Life. Such which makes the solemn Design of the Gospel, all the Mysteries of the Blessed Jesus, with Prayers, Praises, and Sacraments, and the whole Frame of his Religion, not only to assure us of Immortality, and to carry our Burthens, but to be Arguments and Inducements also for our Obedience here, and Preparations for that Divine State we call Heaven hereafter. Such that are so united to their Faith, there will be Peace and Salvation upon them, and the whole *Israel* of God, and their Hopes will be well founded, that when Christ the Author of their Life, and their Religion too, shall appear, they all may appear with him in Glory. *To whom be all Honour, Glory, and Praise, now and for evermore. Amen.*



F I N I S

